

UAMS News Bureau

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**UAMS Otolaryngologist Patrick Fraley, M.D.,
Recognized for Expertise in Sleep Apnea Implant**

LITTLE ROCK — Patrick Fraley, M.D., a board-certified otolaryngologist at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), has been recognized as an Inspire Physician of Excellence.

He is the only physician in Arkansas and one of only 50 surgeons nationwide to receive the designation by Inspire Medical Systems, Inc., the maker of a small implantable device by the same name. It serves as an alternative for people with moderate to severe obstructive sleep apnea who can't find relief with a continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machine.

CPAP machines use a hose connected to a mask or a nosepiece to deliver constant and steady air pressure, keeping users' breathing airways open while they sleep. But some patients find the apparatus too bulky and uncomfortable, while others complain of skin irritation, sores, congestion, headaches, runny nose, dry mouth, nosebleeds or infections.

Fraley said Inspire is an alternative to CPAP but isn't meant to replace CPAP, which is considered the standard of care and the best option for most patients. He said patients must try CPAP first before they can qualify for Inspire.

Inspire works without any attached apparatus. It's a small pacemaker-like device that is implanted in the upper chest through two small hidden incisions — one in the chest and one under the jaw — during a minimally invasive outpatient procedure lasting about two hours.

The patient activates the device after getting into bed by holding a remote control over it and clicking. As the patient falls asleep, the device uses a gentle pulse to move the tongue out of the way, keeping the airway open and allowing normal breathing.

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In 2019, Fraley became the first surgeon in Arkansas to use Inspire, the only FDA-approved obstructive sleep apnea treatment that works inside the body to treat the root cause of sleep apnea.

Since then, he has performed more than 130 of the procedures, making him the most prolific user of the technology in Arkansas and earning him an Inspire Physician of Excellence designation, which signifies his expertise, experience with patients and positive clinical outcomes.

UAMS is the state's only health sciences university, with colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Health Professions and Public Health; a graduate school; a hospital; a main campus in Little Rock; a Northwest Arkansas regional campus in Fayetteville; a statewide network of regional campuses; and seven institutes: the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute, Jackson T. Stephens Spine & Neurosciences Institute, Harvey & Bernice Jones Eye Institute, Psychiatric Research Institute, Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging, Translational Research Institute and Institute for Digital Health & Innovation. UAMS includes UAMS Health, a statewide health system that encompasses all of UAMS' clinical enterprise. UAMS is the only adult Level 1 trauma center in the state. UAMS has 3,240 students, 913 medical residents and fellows, and five dental residents. It is the state's largest public employer with more than 11,000 employees, including 1,200 physicians who provide care to patients at UAMS, its regional campuses, Arkansas Children's, the VA Medical Center and Baptist Health. Visit www.uams.edu or www.uamshealth.com. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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